



Original Contribution

COMPARING THE ATTRIBUTIVE STYLES OF BLIND AND SEEING BOY STUDENTS

M. Narimani*, E. Soleymani, B. Ahadi

Department of Psychology, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Daneshgah st., Ardabil, Iran.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The main purpose of the present research has been comparing the attributive styles of blind and seeing boy students of Ardebil city. **Methods:** In order to achieve this aim, using simple random sampling method, 36 boy students (18 seeing and 18 blind students) were selected from among the students who had been busy studying in exceptional, common and also integrative schools of Ardebil city in academic year 2008-2009. In the present research in order to gather data attributive style questionnaire (ASQ) was used, and the way of the study was of the type causative-comparative and data from the research has been analyzed using multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA). **Results:** Results from the research showed that there were significant differences between attributive style of seeing and blind students concerning internal-external, unstable-stable and general-negligible components. **Conclusions:** These findings suggested that, attributive styles of blind persons are external, stable, and global.

Key words: attributive style, Blindness, students

INTRODUCTION

Being a little careful and thoughtful about the creation of human beings, it will be understood that not any two human beings are the same and alike. These differences can be understood and observed in different physical, mental and behavioral dimensions. Every one human being is exceptional in its general and wide concept, because he / she is different from others concerning different existence dimensions. However, these differences are not probably considerable in most people, thus, such a group is idiomatically called a norm or average group, while what is meant by exceptional concept is in fact the presence of great differences of human beings in different grounds with a group which is idiomatically called a norm or average group (1). One of

such exceptional groups include blind and less-seeing people who from the very early times of the creation of human being had been those who, due to different causes, had been deprived of the sight power but, have been regarded because of other abilities of their own.

Without enjoying the sight power, our understanding about ourselves and other people around us will be more different. This different understanding may cause some emotional and social difficulties for people with seeing disorders (2). A baby who is mother-born blind, experiences the world in his / her own way and this experience is different from that of most babies. He / She also must resolve the special problems. Therefore, his / her personality is influenced by these differences and it is accepted that, because of the deficiency he / she has, it is most probable for him / her to be under the nerve pressure to improve the feeling of failure and lack of security in himself / herself (1).

*Correspondence to: *Mohammad Narimani, Department of psychology, Faculty of literature and humanities; University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Daneshgah st., Ardabil, Iran. Postal code: 56199-11367, Tel: +98 9141519794 Email: mohammad.narimani575@gmail.com*

The concept of "attribution" has been considered by social, clinical and cognitive psychologists for many years. The purpose of the attribution theory is studying the ways by which people express different events and incidents and are to find the cause and effect relations between them.

On the whole, people try to understand the sub-structural reasons for stability of other people's behavior and that, why they have acted following certain methods. This, mainly requires attempts to understand their motives, tendencies and characteristics. Attribution is a complex process by which we observe other people's behavior and then, using the basic information, we try to find about the underlying reasons of those behaviors. Attributive style is related to individuals' tendencies for causative deduction of different behaviors and events of life which take place on the basis of the present and past experiences (3). In order to understand the world as a unit, integrated and predictable thing most people make attributions about events which are based upon internal causes. These dimensions include: causality (whether the considered event or incident originates from internal or external causes?); stability (whether event or incident which has taken place is stable or unstable?); and generality (whether it obeys general rule or it belongs to a special position?) (4).

On the basis of Learned Helplessness theory, Abramson, Seligman and Teasdale (1978), studied the expressing styles of individuals and found out that one group attributes the cause of events to itself and another group attributes it to conditions, situations, and other individuals (internal expressing style vs. external expressing style). They also consider these events as influential in their lives or consider them limited to the same position (general expressing style vs. exclusive one). Also, incompatible attributive styles are in relation with depression, especially with despair, social rejection and lack of acceptance by peers, isolation and severe loneliness, social agitation and hopelessness in response to social failures. Also, some other kind of attribution may increase the environment control of sense of individuals, improve the self-respect, strengthen the sense of self-valuation and reduce the agitation and feeling the sin (5).

Researches done about relationship between attribution and depression show that depressed individuals, attribute negative events to

internal, general and stable factors (6). Also, due to some researches, Shmueli et al (1955), Taylor (1986), Teitellbam (1994), Hersen & Kaba Coff (1995), Szlyk et al (2000), Lee et al (2000) showed the presence of some kind of depression among the blind (1).

Also, in their research about the amount of depression among girl and boy blind adolescents in two integrated and special educational systems, Crick & Ladd (1993) found out that the amount of depression among blind students in special educational system was more than its amount in integrated system (7). Furthermore, the amount of depression among blind girls is more than that among blind boys. On the other hand, Mendolia & Hull (1991) showed that, in comparison with normal individuals, agitated individuals (with high agitation level and high agitation quality) mostly attribute failures and successes to internal and external factors, respectively (1).

Normal individuals (with low agitation state and low agitation quality) often attribute the successes and failures to internal and external factors, respectively. On the other hand, research done by Shaver (1975) has shown that, in their attributive style against negative events, there are significant differences between children with more and less stable agitation. Also, in case of the blinds, Hensly (1987), Wilhelm (1989) and Foyal (1992) showed the presence of agitation among individuals with failure in sight power (9). Results from the research done by Wortman (1976) also are indicatives of the fact that, in comparison with seeing students, blind students enjoy more external control resource. However, sex, level of study, and the type of blindness (primary or secondary) variables didn't have significant effect on control resource (10).

Taking the above said studies into account, which show that there are close relationships between attributive styles, and depression and agitation, and on the other hand, in comparison with seeing students, blind students enjoy high level of agitation and depression, it can be deduced that in comparison with seeing students, blind students enjoy different attributive styles.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

All of the blind and seeing students (boys and girls) who had been registered in academic

year 2008-2009, were included in statistical universe of the present research. Regarding the point that research method in the present study is causative-comparative, and that, the number of sub-groups should be at least 15 individuals (11), but for the purpose of increasing the external validity of the research 18 students were selected for each sub-group. In this way, the sample of the present research included 18 blind high school boy students and 18 seeing boy students, that were selected randomly from among the blind and seeing boy students.

Data gathering was done using the attribution style questionnaire. This questionnaire evaluates the causative attributions of individuals for positive and negative consequences in dimensions of the focus of causality, stability and generality. The main form of this research that has been recognized following the renewed model of acquired distress for measuring the students' attributions by Seligman et al (1979) includes ten hypothetical positions containing five positions for evaluating the individual's causative attributions about positive consequences (success) and five positions for evaluating the individual's causative attributions about negative consequences (failure). Attribution style questionnaire contains 30 questions in the form of five choice and each position has 3 questions. Acquired Cronbakh α coefficient are

as follows: 75% for internal bad consequence, 74% for internal good consequence, 43% for stable bad consequence, 56% for stable good consequence, and 76% for general bad consequence. Furthermore, the previous studies have shown that these instruments bear high validity (4). When data was gathered, information was analyzed using MANOVA statistical instrument.

RESULTS

Findings from the research showed that the age range of participants had been 18-25, and 77% and 33% of them were single and married, respectively. As **Table 1** shows, the average of blind students in internal-external, unstable-stable, and general-negligible components is less that of seeing students. It should be mentioned that the higher the average is, the more internal, unstable, and negligible the attributive style will be.

Results from multi-variable variance analysis for comparing the averages of the two group in three micro-test of attributive style have been shown in **Table 2**. As this table shows, there are significant differences between the two seeing and blind groups concerning the components of internal-external ($P < 0.01$, $F = 25/74$, $df = 1$) attributive style. That is to say, attributive style of blind people is external, stable and general.

Table 1. Average and Standard Deviation scores of the two group in three micro-test of attributive style

Variables	Groups	Sample Counts	Average	Standard Deviation
Internal-External	Blind	18	34/44	6/69
	Seeing	18	37/05	6/69
Unstable-Stable	Blind	18	38/44	4/99
	Seeing	18	41/94	5/24
Negligible-General	Blind	18	22/11	2/08
	Seeing	18	26/77	3/29

Table2. Multi-variable variance analysis scores of the two group in three micro-test of attributive style

Variables	Groups	Freedom Grades	Average of Squares	F	Significance Level
Internal-External	Blind Seeing	1	173/36	3/718	.052
Stable-Unstable	Blind Seeing	1	110/25	4/205	.048
General-Negligible	Blind Seeing	1	196/00	25/741	.000

DISCUSSION

Results from the present research shows that there are significant differences between seeing and blind students concerning different dimensions of attributive style (internal – external – unstable – stable and general – negligible). That is to say attributive style among the blind students is mostly in the form of external, stable and general and among the seeing ones is mostly in the form of internal, unstable and negligible, and that these styles can have considerable effects on behavior of these students. Students with internal, stable, and general attributive styles tend to attribute the negative events to internal, stable and general causes and those with external, unstable and negligible attributive styles tend to attribute negative events to external, unstable and negligible causes.

Results from the present research, which showed that, in comparison with seeing students, blind students have been enjoying more external control resources, are in agreement with the study of Wortman (1976). Also, the reasoning that there is close relationship between attributive styles and depression and agitation in one hand, and studies by Foyal (1992), Hensley (1987), and Wilhelm (1989) that showed the presence of agitation among people with sight difficulties (9) and also Szlyk et al, 2000, Hersen & Kaba Coff 1955; Taylor, 1986; Lee et al, 2000; Shmuelly et al, 1955; Teitellbam, 1994 (1) showed some kind of depression among the blinds (in comparison with seeing students , blind students suffer more from agitation and depression) on the other, confirmed that in comparison with seeing students, blind ones enjoyed different attributive styles.

REFERENCES

1. Heward, W. *Exceptional Children An Introduction to Special Education*. 8th. NewYork. Prentice Hall. 2005.
2. Iris, T & Corn, Anne L. *When you have a visually handicapped child in your classroom.: Suggestions for Teachers* . NewYork. American Foundation for the Blind Press. 1990.
3. Metalsky, G. I., & Abramson, L. Y. Attribution styles: Toward a framework for conceptualization and assessment. In P. C. Kendall & S. D. Hollon(Eds), *Assament strategies for cognitive behavioral intervention*(pp.13-58). New york: Academic press. 1981.
4. Abramson, L. Y., Seligman, M. E. P., &Teasdale, J. D. *Learned Helplessness in Humans: Critique and Reformulation*. *J Abnorm psychol*, 87, 49-74. 1978.
5. Ames, R., Ames & Garrison, W. *Childrens causal ascriptions for positive and negative interpersonal outcomes*. *Psychol Rep*. 41,595-602. 1997.
6. Addington, D., Addington, J., & Robinson, G. *Attributional style and depression in schizophrenia*. *Can J psychiatry*. 44 , 697-700. 1999.
7. Crick, N, R & Ladd, G. *Childrens perceptions of their peer experiences: Attribution, loneliness, social anxiety, and social avoidance*. *Dev Psychol*, 29, 244-254. 1993.
8. Shaver, K, G. *An introduction to attribution process*. Englewood cliffs, N. J: Prentice-Hall. 1975.
9. Thomas, E. *Negative attributional style, hopelessness depression and andogenous depression*. *Behav Res and Ther*. 39, 139-149. 2001.
10. Wortman, C. B. *Causal attribution and personal control*. In J. H. Harvey, W. J. Ickes and R. F. Kidd(Eds), *New direction in attribution reseach*. NewYork: Erlbaum. 1976.
11. Dooley, D. *Social research methods*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1984.